

# The Commoner.

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"The body of Benjamin Franklin (like the cover of an old book, its contents torn out, and stripped of its leather and gilding) lies here food for the worms; yet the work itself shall not be lost, for it will, as he believes, appear once more in a new and more beautiful edition, corrected and amended by the author."—Franklin's epitaph, written by himself.



### MUCKRAKING

In view of the president's attacks on various and sundry individuals, including governors of states, senators and members of congress, would it not be well for him to send a message to congress reproducing his speech on the muckrake? He then dealt scornfully with those who threw mud at public officials.



### PUBLICITY, TOO

In the light of Mr. Roosevelt's contention that the senate has no right to demand information from departmental heads, Mr. Roosevelt's essays, written several years ago on "publicity," would be just about as interesting as his oldtime essays on "muckraking."



### THE PICTURE, ANYWAY

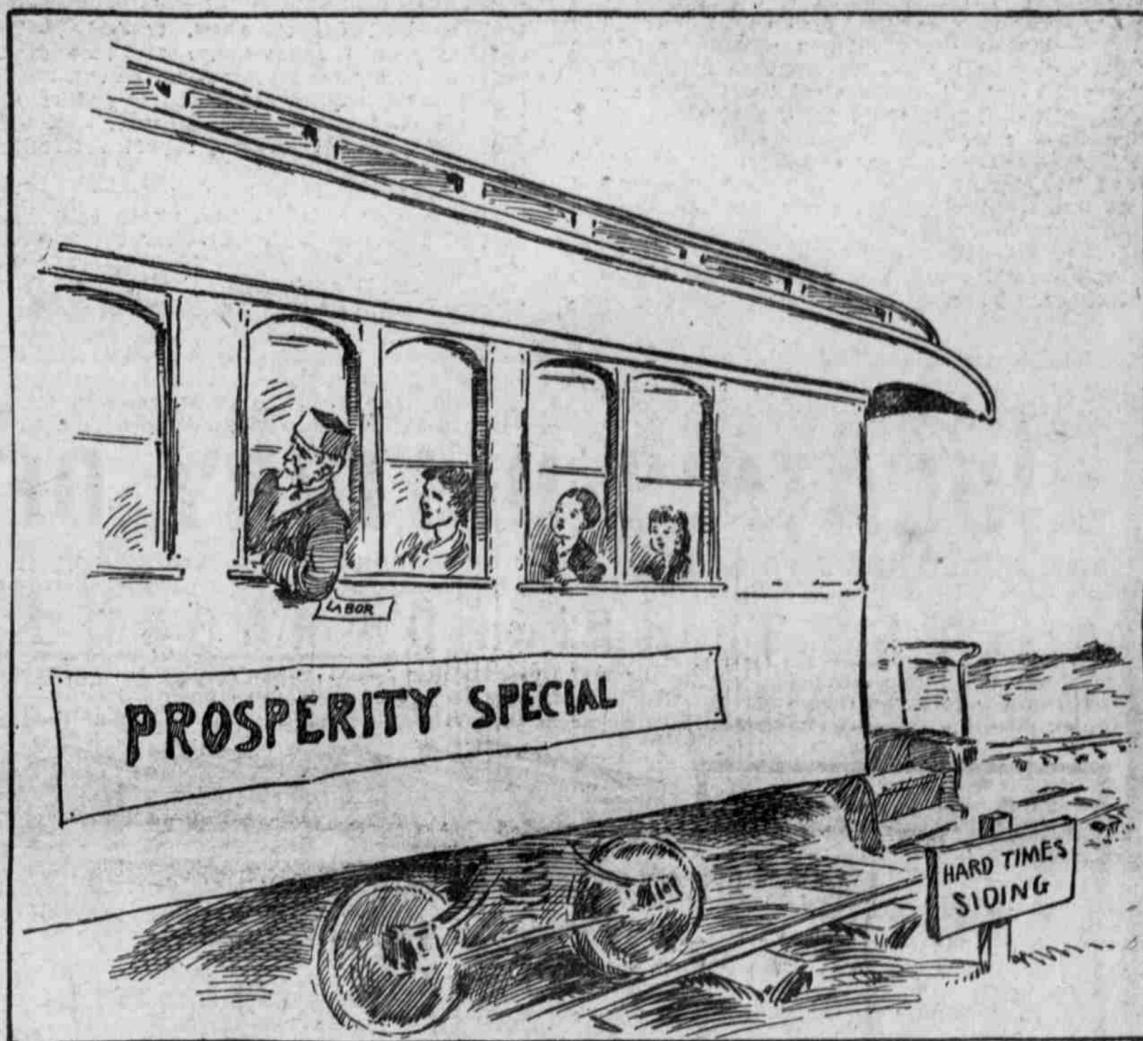
From the press report of the marriage ceremony between an American girl and a titled foreigner, the following is taken:

"The gifts to the bride included a check from her father for \$100,000 to be supplemented later on, it is said, by a London town house from her grandfather. Her mother gave her a tira of pearls and diamonds with tips of pear-shaped pearls and diamonds. The bridegroom's gifts to her were a collar, tiara and corsage ornaments of diamonds, but of those she has seen only the photographs, the originals remaining in London to greet her when she arrives there."

Our foreign brethren may not be able to detect any humor in this report, but it is "dollars to doughnuts" that the American paragraphs will have something to say about the presentation to the bride of a "photograph of jewels."



Only forty more days until March 4—and then, at least, we'll rest.



"When are we going to pull out?"

## AN UNEXAMPLED PERFORMANCE

The Commoner assumes no risk when it declares that the president has confessed himself guilty of an unexampled performance in his letter to the senate in reply to the Culberson resolution. In one of his letters to Mr. Bryan during the campaign, Mr. Roosevelt admitted that the steel trust had secured his consent before swallowing up its rival, but the letter which the president sent the attorney general embodying this consent stands forth as one of the strangest public documents to be found in the nation's archives. Here is a president of the United States in conference with the managers of one of the greatest of the trusts. They represented to him that they did not care to gobble up their rival, but that they were so anxious to protect the business situation that they were constrained to do this if the president would permit. The president, accepting their representations and endorsing them, notifies the attorney general that he does not feel it his "public duty" "to interpose an objection." This letter is republished that the reader may carefully examine the language:

"Washington, D. C., November 4, 1907.—My Dear Attorney General: Judge E. H. Gary and Mr. H. C. Frick, on behalf of the steel corporation have just called upon me. They state that there is a certain business firm (the name of which I have not been told, but which is of real importance in New York business circles) which will undoubtedly fail this week if help is not given. Among its assets are a majority of the securities of the Tennessee Coal and Iron company. Application has been urgent-

ly made to the steel corporation to purchase this stock as the only means of avoiding a failure. Judge Gary and Mr. Frick informed me that as a mere business transaction they do not care to purchase the stock, that under ordinary circumstances they would not consider purchasing the stock, but little benefit will come to the steel corporation from the purchase, that they are aware that the purchase will be used as a handle for attack on them on the ground that they are endeavoring to secure a monopoly of the business and prevent competition—not that this would represent what could honestly be said, but what might recklessly and untruthfully be said.

"They inform me that as a matter of fact the policy of the company has been to decline to acquire more than sixty per cent of the steel properties and that this has been persevered in for several years past, with the object of preventing these accusations and as a matter of fact their proportion of steel properties has slightly decreased, so that it is below this sixty per cent, and the acquisition of the property in question will not raise it above sixty per cent. But they feel that it is immensely to their interest, as to the interest of every responsible business man, to try to prevent a panic and general industrial smashup at this time and that they are willing to go into this transaction, which they would not otherwise go into because it seems the opinion of those best fitted to express judgment in New York that it will be an important factor in preventing a break that might be ruinous and that had been urged